



Second Sense
Beyond vision loss

Because of you...

Melissa reaches her goal, pg 1

Teachers learn new skills, pg 1

Tech students have options, pg 4

Winter 2018

Perspectives

Melissa's Roller Coaster Ride with Vision Loss

"There are two Melissas. One before I lost my vision and one after."



Melissa takes time out of her busy schedule to work as a bell ringer for the Salvation Army.

The old Melissa was independent. She had her own company working as a real estate appraiser. She had a home and a full life.

The new Melissa was born overnight.

"I woke up one morning in 2006 and my vision was all blurry. The doctors

didn't know why. My company dissolved in six months. My house went into foreclosure and my car was repossessed."

Melissa started living from day-to-day, eking out an existence from her small disability check.

She moved from place to place as the rent grew beyond her means until she ended up at the YMCA in Niles.

In 2014, eight years after she began her journey with vision loss, Melissa attended a presentation by Polly Abbott, our director of services. Polly was describing the services and

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Teachers Learn to Prepare Students for Life



"We are all Teachers of the Visually Impaired or Mobility Instructors. We don't have a background in teaching daily living skills. But, we are now expected to teach these skills to our students. All of us are a little overwhelmed.

"This opportunity to work with Polly is providing this important training we can now

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Second Sense uses your donation wisely. See how on page 3.

Walking out the front door. Jotting down a phone number. Sending an email.

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Melissa's Ride

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training available to people with vision loss.

“It was after that when I decided to get the old Melissa back. I put up old photos in my room to remind myself of who I was.”

“I now knew the state would pay for education that would help me find a job. So I started the construction management program at the College of DuPage.”



“Second Sense has given me the confidence I need to take the next step.” ~ Melissa

“I used my new skills to get a job at Lowe’s in Northbrook.”

Melissa also started participating in our training. She learned mobility skills so she could travel safely. She also took our self-defense class to make her feel confident to travel alone.

Melissa learned to use a computer with a screen magnification program. And, how to use her new iPhone.

“My church, Living Work Christian Center, was my rock during my journey. My faith was my stability.”

Church members trained with her and ran with her when Melissa completed the Chicago

marathon in 2011.

And, they provided a 9-month business training program. A program Melissa completed in January 2017.

She now has her own business, MTC Properties 1. She locates investors to renovate homes in Lawndale for US veterans.

The old Melissa is back. She is a home owner again. She is confident and independent.

“Taking that next step takes a lot of confidence. Second Sense gave me the confidence and the training. I now know that if I need anything I have a place I can go.” ●

Because of You: In 2017

53 clients completed computer classes

73 Seniors received in-home technology training

64 people worked with volunteer tech tutors



92 adults learned to travel safely with a white cane

44 adults learned the 1Touch® self-defense technique

42 seniors learned to move about their homes safely



158

Seniors received training in their own homes to cook, clean, organize, track appointments and complete other daily chores



532

people learned the skills they need to live independent lives, active and engaged in their families and communities

Prepare Students

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share with our students.” This is how Cindy summed up the reason this group of teachers from the North Suburban Special Education Operative came to Second Sense for a day of training.

Polly spent the morning showing them how to teach activities of daily living to their students. Skills like cutting meat, clipping fingernails, putting on makeup and opening containers.

Katie shared, “These are all skills they need. Their sighted peers have

them. Our visually impaired students need these skills to stay competitive with their peers.”

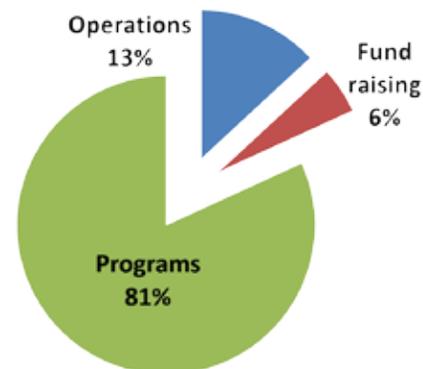
While these skills may not be necessary to excel in school, they are necessary to succeed in work and social interactions. ●



Knitting provides students with a relaxing hobby and a social outlet all while improving fine motor skills.

How Your Donations are Wisely Used:

Now, your donation does even more! A foundation is matching all new and increased donations up to \$50,000 — dollar for dollar. Double your gift and double the impact.



Providing Options for Technology Training Helps Reach a Wider Audience

Thanks to you, clients can choose the best way for them to learn technology.

Jocelyn took advantage of all our options. She started out using our open lab to increase her keyboarding speed before starting training class.

Once in class, Jocelyn made appointments with our volunteer tutors to work on skills she found challenging. She also kept on practicing her keyboarding. All her efforts paid off — she completed training and earned 91% on her skills assessment.

Now Jocelyn attends our monthly Apple Exchange group to make the most of her iPhone.

Not everyone learns the same way or at the same pace. Or even wants to learn the same thing.



Jocelyn, Susan, Charlotte and Jim test a new app on their iPhones during Apple Exchange.

Giving them options encourages learning, getting them on the path to independence much more quickly.

And our new in-home training for seniors allows them to learn all the great new tech tools in the comfort of their

homes.

Technology can be a great tool of independence — if you have the right training. And, the “right” training means different things to different clients. ●



David quizzes Abdu on key commands during computer class.



Curtis works on keyboarding skills with our tutor Mary.



Margaret tries out the Apple iMac in our open lab.